

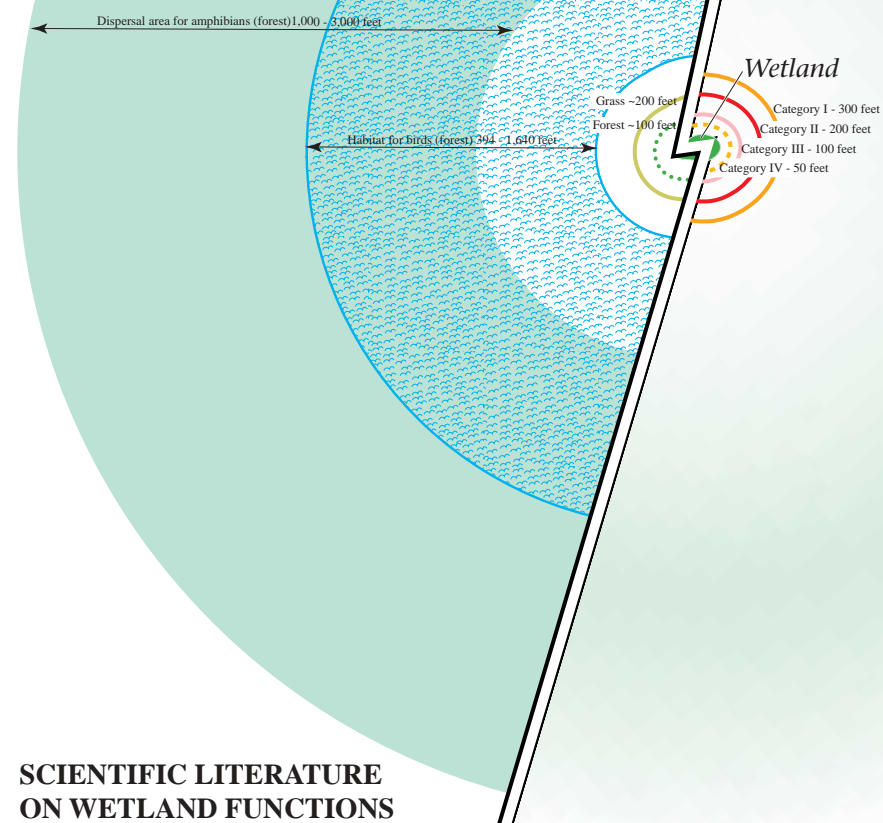
Wetland Buffers

Different widths are needed to protect different functions:

SCIENCE ON WETLAND FUNCTIONS

SYMBOL	FUNCTION	DISTANCE FROM WETLAND	VEGETATION TYPE
—	Water Quality Enhancement/ Sediment retention	~200 feet	Grass
.....		~100 feet	Forest
■	Habitat for Amphibians	1,000 - 3,000 feet (dispersal distance)	Forest
■	Habitat for Birds	394 - 1,640 feet	Forest

NOTE: The information above is for depressional wetlands only (not riparian) and is excerpted from documented scientific studies. See King County's Best Available Science papers for more detailed citations.



SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE
ON WETLAND FUNCTIONS

The draft Critical Areas Ordinance proposes different buffers based on functions, values, and irreplaceability:

DRAFT CAO PROPOSED BUFFERS

SYMBOL	WETLAND CATEGORY	BUFFER WIDTH
—	Category I — Meet one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Habitat for endangered or threatened species such as chinook salmon;High quality native wetlands included in the state Natural Heritage Information System;Regionally significant resource areas in adopted basin plan;Significant waterfowl or shorebird concentration areas;Irreplaceable ecological functions; orExceptional local significance.	300 feet
—	Category II — No Category I criteria and meet one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Habitat for locally-listed species or candidates for threatened or endangered species listing;Significant functions that may not be replicated through creation or restoration;Significant habitat value; andLocally significant habitat that are not Category I.	200 feet
—	Category III - Any wetland that does not qualify as Category I, II, or IV.	100 feet
.....	Category IV — No Category I, II, III criteria and meets the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Isolated from other waterbodies; andDominated by non-native plants or soft rush/hard hack/cattail.	50 feet

DRAFT CAO PROPOSED BUFFERS

Flexible Reporting Requirements

When altering land in a critical area or its buffer certain reports may be required. King County aims to make these requirements simpler and more flexible.

- Critical Areas Review - required for proposal to develop or alter a critical area or its buffer.
- Major Habitat Evaluation — required for some projects that do not to comply with proposed standards. This type of report could enable site-specific protections, allowing more flexibility in development options.
- Wetland Delineation and Functional Assessment — required if the proposed alteration would impact a wetland area.

Note: For some activities, there may be more reporting requirements than under current regulations.